

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
FEBRUARY 17, 2015**

ITEM 4

SUBJECT

REPORT ON RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF WATER RIGHTS DURING DROUGHT CONDITIONS.

DISCUSSION

On July 2, 2014, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board or Board) adopted [Resolution No. 2014-0031](#), approving a drought-related emergency regulation for curtailment of water diversions to protect senior water rights. Recognizing that drought conditions may continue into 2015, the Board described in Resolution No. 2014-0031 its intent to engage stakeholders in an assessment of the information used to make water availability and water right priority determinations.

On September 10, 2014, the Board sent out a notice requesting recommendations to inform preparation of a staff report on actions that stakeholders feel should be taken to implement and enforce the water rights priority system in future dry years. The Board received 36 letters in response to the solicitation. Board staff met with various stakeholder groups to discuss their recommendations for the report.

The [report](#) focuses on four areas: 1) the State Water Board's January 1978 "Dry Year Program" and its recommendations for enforcing the water rights priority system; 2) the 2014 curtailment and complaint process; 3) the quality of the data in the water rights database for post-1914 and pre-1914 appropriative water rights and riparian water rights; and 4) opportunities to expand and improve data and database capabilities to assist with the implementation of the water rights priority system in future dry years.

POLICY ISSUE

N/A – Informational Item only

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A – Informational Item only

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

N/A – Informational Item only

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

N/A – Informational Item only

<p>This item will assist the Water Boards in reaching Goal 5, of the Strategic Plan Update: 2008-2012 to improve transparency and accountability by ensuring that Water Board goals and actions are clear and accessible, by demonstrating and explaining results achieved with respect to the goals and resources available, by enhancing and improving accessibility of data and information, and by encouraging the creation of organizations or cooperative agreements that advance this goal, such as establishment of a statewide water data institute.</p>
